1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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shown by the way in which one fearing witchcraft, or accused of practising it, moves to another village. Sometimes he goes to another chiefdom, but often he only moves to another village in the same chiefdom—the chief himself may feel safe in one village of his country and not in another (*vide* Document, p. 190). It is on his fellow villagers that the good man depends for protection, and it is they whom the evil-doer fears.

Accusations within the lineage are rare. At first we were told that they did not occur at all; later a number of elderly informants agreed that this was not true—'the young men have misled you', they said; but careful inquiry only elicited three concrete cases[1] of witchcraft within the lineage (cf. table, p. 204). As we have seen, fellow members of a lineage normally live in different villages, and just how the idea of attacks by kinsmen is reconciled with the theory of village defence is not clear. Possibly it is argued that the witch attacks while visiting his kinsman, for it is in terms of visiting that the effect of 'the breath of men' on erring sons or younger brothers is explained. Where 'the breath of men' is thought to have affected someone of another village, it is argued that he or she came frequently to visit in the village of the attackers (cf. Document, p. 237), and the heir who neglects his elder brother's or father's funeral rites, and who is thought to suffer from 'the breath' of the deceased's justly indignant neighbours, is supposed to fall ill when he comes to their village to enter into his inheritance, or to make arrangements for the disposal of his property.

Even within the village it is the immediate neighbours that are primarily concerned in a case of suspected witchcraft. In the large villages of the plains the leader of a section, 'he of the heap of hot ashes', has the specific duty of protecting the herd which stands in the smoke of his fire against witches; and in smaller villages, also, a witchcraft case commonly begins with murmuring among a few next-door neighbours. Suspicion of witchcraft falls first on a member of the same village-section, then on a fellow villager; only rarely, and in peculiar circumstances, does it fall on a member of another village, and never on someone outside the chiefdom.

Differences of rank are relatively slight in Nyakyusa society

[1] A possible fourth is quoted on p. 126, but the exact relationship of the accused to the victim was not known to our informants.

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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abanyago have no more general authority than the doctors who divine or treat the sick. Their parallels among men are the priests (also called *abanyago*) who perform the rain ritual and the sacrifices to dead chiefs.

The one position which endows a woman with legal authority is that of father's sister. A senior sister has a joint responsibility, along with the headman of the village, for the distribution of her dead brother's property, and her brother's children may appeal to her to arbitrate if they have a dispute with their father while he is yet alive: this is particularly important in the families of chiefs, since a chief's son cannot bring his father before commoners for arbitration. The authority of a father's sister is, however, exercised only within the lineage and does not extend even to wives of lineage members. Co-wives may take a dispute for arbitration to their husband, but if, as often happens, he is thought to be prejudiced, they go to a male neighbour, or to the headman of the village, in the same way as when the dispute is with an unrelated person (cf. p. 140).

Only in the group of unmarried girls in a village does there appear to be the germ of control by seniors of the same sex. We record one case in which a quarrel between two girls nearing the age of puberty was settled by the slightly older girls of the same village, who punished one who had beaten her fellow without justification, and then lied to them when they inquired into the case, by scratching her with their nails. As they reach puberty the girls, who have grown up together in one village and formed a closely knit group, become scattered among the different age-villages of their husbands and there leadership among women is not developed (*vide infra*, pp. 171–2). This does not mean, however, that women are excluded from arbitration; they can, and frequently do, bring cases on their own account, not necessarily acting through husband or father. Unlike the pagans, Christian women who have quarrelled do sometimes ask a leading woman of their congregation to arbitrate. At Rungwe the women leaders were the sister of the chief and the wife of a teacher, both personalities; and it was to them that their fellows went to relate their troubles and ask for an opinion. We record two such cases. Very often, however, Christian women go to a man, the Christian leader of the village, as their husbands do.

The Administration has not attempted to suppress arbitration

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 F7617 Ngonde F7617
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This practice of having official witnesses to every contract, and summoning them to give evidence should a dispute later arise, is one of the most important means of maintaining order in Nyakyusa society, and village neighbours are the usual witnesses.

c. Communal responsibility of the age-village

Formerly, in Nyakyusa law two forms of group responsibility were emphasized: the mutual responsibility of kinsmen, and the mutual responsibility of fellow villagers. A case of murder or manslaughter was primarily the concern of the agnatic lineage if the victim was a male or an unmarried girl, and of the lineages of both husband and father if the victim was a married woman. The kinsmen either killed the murderer, or brought him before the chief, who imposed a fine which went to the injured relatives. The Nyakyusa make a distinction between "spearing by day" (direct physical injury) and "spearing by night" (witchcraft); and only in the latter type of case did the fine go to the chief. Witchcraft was thus treated as an offence against the state—the chiefdom—while murder or manslaughter was an offence against the kinsmen of the dead. The concern of the state in witchcraft, and the joint responsibility of kinsmen on the one hand, and of fellow villagers on the other, was evident when, as sometimes happened, both groups were required by the chief to clear themselves of suspicion of witchcraft by each providing a representative to take the poison ordeal. Should the representative of either group fail to vomit then the responsible individual within that group was sought out by means of divination and the ordeal (*vide supra*, p. 108).

In a case of adultery the injured husband, together with his kinsmen, pursued and attempted to kill, or torture and kill, the adulterer: self-help was not only permitted but expected in this situation,[1] and a man's near kinsmen were obliged to assist him. Neighbours were not obliged to assist in executing vengeance, but they might be victims of it, for if the injured husband did not find the adulterer he might kill any village-mate of his enemy. Such an attack commonly led to war between the two villages,

[1] Cf. R. Hamilton, *The Spear-Holder Cloth* (1935), p. 61, says: "The injured husband has the right to inflict death on the paramour. This is no mere tale of the past but a grim fact to-day .... cases of this nature are very numerous."

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngumbo FN17
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on the other hand, come from many villages, and they move from village to village more than men, because most women are inherited at least once in their lives. Nor do the women form an age-set, for men inherit wives as old, or older than themselves, and they continue to marry young brides until they themselves are elderly. A village thus contains women of all ages, the older ones often being quite late-comers to it. There is neither the unity of a kinship group, with leadership of mother or grandmother, as among a matrilineal people like the Bemba, nor the leadership of the mother-in-law as among the patrilineal Nguni and Sotho peoples. It is true that among the latter peoples the leadership of women devolves on a man's senior wife when his mother is dead, but the pattern has developed in a society in which daughters-in-law usually live for a long time in the same homestead as their mother-in-law, whereas among the pagan Nyakyusa a woman rarely joins her own son until she is decrepit, long after his marriage. When the Nguni or Sotho chief wife is obeyed by her co-wives it is as the successor of her mother-in-law; indeed on the latter's death she is often referred to by junior wives as 'mother'. Where women have authority in a patrilineal society it is usually as mother, or grandmother, or father's sister. But these are none with such positions in the context of the age-village; the office of headman is not hereditary so there is no mother of the heir, and the headman's own mother and sisters normally live elsewhere.

Such solidarity and leadership as exist among women in pagan Nyakyusa society are within the group of women of the same lineage who live together. Great emphasis is laid on the propriety of a wife bringing a younger sister, or brother's daughter, as a junior wife for her husband (**ukusubala**): this is felt to be a compliment to the husband and a comfort to the wife, proof that the marriage has been a success. Co-wives who are of the same lineage are very closely identified, their children being treated almost as full siblings, and they themselves co-operating in everything.

One of the marked changes in contemporary Nyakyusa society is the development of leadership among women in the Christian congregations.

2: Wilson K-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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would never dry up.' Kasitile said: 'The work of the *undemile* and *ikipiki* are the same, they are together. The heavy ones will overstep the girl, they are going to injure her so that she is barren, constantly menstruating, with painful periods.' Lyandileke, a woman doctor, and exceptionally intelligent, said: 'The bride uses the *ikipiki* medicine because she is empty (*kwati*). So she washes and eats bananas with *ikipiki*. If she does not wash with it she will have diarrhoea.'

The *ikipiki* is also said to make a bride 'patient and polite'. 'If the girl did not wash with the powdered medicine (*ikipiki*) she might be rude and proud when she went to her husband's home and insult men there.' This was the statement of Mwakwelebeja, an old commoner particularly well versed in matters of ritual, and it was separately confirmed both by his wife and by Lyandileke, the woman doctor, but not everyone knew the connexion. Mwaibeje, the chief, who was present when Mwakwelebeja gave his explanation, said: 'Really! I never knew that!' and his wives, when applied to, said: 'We don't know. The mothers have died' (this though some of them were past middle age).

Angombwike identified the *ikipiki* medicine with 'the blood of a lineage and a bride's treatment with it with the union in marriage. He said:

> As soon as a girl grows up people begin to think about her bearing children. They say: 'The mothers *iwa* is discharged, the blood for bearing children has come.' When they grind and brew beer in her honour, they do it in honour of her '*iwa*' [i.e. menstrual blood]. They give her medicine for disciplining her in the lineage of her husband. When the mothers hear they cry: 'Oum, oum, it has fruited! (*Ifwa, ifwa, ifipiki*).' The girl is given a bundle of the medicine, powdered, and is made to wear a belt of bark-cloth with the powder in it; the medicine is brought from the husband's home by his mothers. The husband, as it were, says: 'That is my blood [*or* semen] which I have sent to her.' The little bundle is the symbol (*ikimanpiki*) of the child she will bear, the belt with medicine on it means that the mothers '*iwa*' belongs to the blood of that husband. The powdered medicine is brought by the husband's mother. A man's chief wife always has a bamboo flask or a pot full of medicine of their lineage (*ya bikulale* (*sube*), powdered ready for use. If she dies it goes to the second wife, if the husband dies to the first wife of the eldest son, and by her it is distributed as seed. The powdered medicine is the blood (*mulondanga*[a] *ya ilipa*).

[a] i.e. the powder made from the *ikipiki*.

2: Wilson E-S (1934-1938)1957 F3617 :Ngonde F3617
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difficult labour is from this, not from adultery. And in a case of difficult labour her husband does pray to his shades.

All were agreed that a woman is in the power of the shades of her father's lineage and if her father is angry with her, or with his son-in-law her husband, his shades afflict her, causing her to be barren or to have miscarriages, or ailing children. Hence a woman who is barren or ill, or whose children are sickly, often returns to her father's homestead so that he may pray for her, and she sleeps there on the night of the ritual, for the shades come by night. More rarely, if she has quarrelled with her father, she goes outside her husband's homestead and, facing towards her father's home, she prays herself on the pathway. But in all the cases we traced in which a woman's ancestors were believed to have made her, or her child, ill, there was a dispute between her father (or his heir) and her husband over marriage-cattle or the bull of puberty; and we were told that her father's shades 'are angry only if marriage-cattle have not been paid, and for no other reason', thus it seems that the control of her father's shades over a married woman is in fact somewhat limited.

The characteristic illness sent by the shades is sore round the mouth, and fever—an illness which is not acute and clears up quickly. These symptoms are immediately interpreted as *imisoka*, affliction from the shades. Beer going sour before it is mature is also *imisoka*, usually thought to be caused by quarrels between husband and wife. But almost any misfortune, mild or serious, is interpreted as *imisoka* if members of the lineage are conscious of quarrels between themselves, or with their spouses or fathers-in-law.

The ritual consists in the reconciliation of the living in the presence of the dead and, if the misfortune is serious, a sacrifice of flesh, fish, or fowl. The junior begs pardon of his senior who acknowledges his anger and expresses forgiveness by taking a mouthful of water from his calabash cup (*ukupindi*) and blowing it out (*ukusipata*) in his sacred banana grove. For the patient to recover, or the blight on crops or fish-traps to be removed, *the senior kinsman must confess his anger*, and spitting, or blowing out water, is a symbol of confession and forgiveness. Mwainumo was explicit on the matter: 'If a father is angry with his son or daughter he may say, some day: "I forgive you now" and spit on the ground: all the anger that is in him comes out like spit.' *Ukusesa* means both 'to

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 F311? Ngonde F311?
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783 epic' and 'to forgive'. *Ukupata* means 'to blow out water' and *ukupatana* (the reflexive form) means 'to pray', with the implication of confessing whatever anger or grudge a man may have in his heart. Full confession both by the wrongdoer and by seniors who have been angry are held to be essential to the lifting of the misfortune.

777 The man who prays represents the living members of the lineage
783 and he calls on his immediate seniors, who are dead, for support.
● 618 'You, Father, you my elder brother, you so-and-so (his grandfather) stand by me, help me, do not be angry, here I am, your child, your younger brother. I am above here, it was not I who killed you but Kyala alone.'

He may also remonstrate with the shades, asking why they should afflict the living. *Ukwikomeya* (lit. 'to cause oneself to blame', from the root *ukukoma* 'to scold' or 'to blame') is used to mean 'to sacrifice', and the conception of remonstrating with, or scolding, troublesome shades is an element of Nyakyusa sacrifice.

783 If beer has been prepared, a libation is poured out either on the
782 hearth-bricks or in the banana grove nearest the door of the house, which is used by the owner as his sacred grove (*ikijuju kyako ikikoma*). If an animal is sacrificed the blood must soak into the earth for, as already indicated, the 'earth is the shade's'. Furthermore, the rest of the beer or the fish and the *ijo nsupa* meat from the footing of the beast[1] is left overnight on the ground in the sacred grove, more rarely under the officiant's bed, and eaten or drunk in the morning by young boys of the lineage, grandsons[2] of the last deceased, for they are 'the comrades of the shades'. Other people may finish up the beer or meat, but wives of the lineage may not touch it: they seclude themselves in their huts and remain alone during the ritual, for 'they fear their fathers-in-law (*bakatile abakwesuwa*)'.

783 The proper person to approach the shades is (among com-
618 moners) the senior member of a lineage of three generations; but if he lives at a considerable distance—perhaps twenty miles or more away—then a junior may pray on his own account, only asking help from his senior in cases of serious illness. 'If father and son, or brothers, live far apart, as here in Selya and at Mwaya

[[71]]

[1] The ear is the same as the Xhosa *umyeyezo* which is sacred to a Pondo sacrifice, cf. M. Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, p. 249. Nyakyusa informants denied that the gall is of importance in this ritual as it is among the Ngoni and Tsan.

[2] One case was collected of a son of the last deceased, still a small child, standing the accidental beer.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 F'317 Ngonde F'317
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(forty miles away), then, if a child is a little ill, you pray yourself, 713
but if it is very ill you send a message to your elder.' The senior 4/3
knows the shades (*ajimanya imisoka*) and prays alone.

The wives of a lineage avoid everything connected with offerings to the shades in the same way as they avoid a father-in-law, even though their husband's father is not yet dead and they do not avoid his living grandfather: 'If a cock has grown up at my homestead my wives do not eat it. It is taboo. It is the shades'. But my wives may eat a hen. When the cock crows it rouses the house. If a wife eats it she will die soon and people will say: "She has eaten a cock." ' A wife also avoids bananas from the sacred grove, and sacrificial meat and beer, and milk from a cow that has looked into a grave; she must stay alone and secluded in her hut when prayer is made in the grove, and is forbidden to sleep by the hearth at night.

Mwasumo's account of 'prayer when a child is ill' and descrip- 713
tions of four particular rituals will make the procedure clearer. 715

Mwasumo: Our regular custom here, when a child is ill with sores on the mouth from *imeala*, is to pray to the shades (*abanjimi bakuyaka*), especially to my father, or my elder brother if I have inherited from him. Before I pray I go to a diviner. We consult the oracle, and he tells [715]
me: 'It is *imeala*, your fathers are angry because you have not performed such and such a ritual, perhaps because you have not killed cattle at the funeral of your brother, or your mother's brother, perhaps you have not performed the later death ritual for them.' So when I come home I tell my relatives and wives all the diviner has told me. Then they complain (*abanjajisi*) saying: 'Why are they angry? Take water and complain in the evening.'

So at dusk, when the cattle come home, I take my calabash cup (*akapimbi*), and water, and a live coal from the fire, and put it in the calabash. I go out to the banana grove of my father where I always pray. I take a mouthful of water, I blow it out and say: 'You, Father, you *no-mi-no*, you *no-mi-no*, why are you angry, Father? Since you left me I have nourished the children. How have I wronged you? Even though I have wronged you, forgive me, Father, may the child recover. Guard by me.' When I have finished I enter the house, and next day I may find the child a little better.

Before I pray, if the diviner has told me that they are angry because I have sinned a certain brother of something, I go to tell him and beg his pardon for neglecting him, my brother. Sometimes, if it is a serious case concerning a cow that I have not given him, I seek for a cow with which to ask his forgiveness.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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585 between' accompanies 'the mothers-in-law' when they go to induct or instruct the bride, and the wife of her father's 'go-between' is one of the group of mothers which takes the bride to her husband. The duties of a 'go-between' do not end at marriage: the [95] groom's 'go-between' is responsible for taking to the bride's people the hen to announce the birth of the first child, and, among the Lugulu, the 'go-between' of the father is master of ceremonies at the ritual of vituperation.

789 602 The ideas that emerge from this analysis are, that in the *protective* rituals—after death, twin birth, spearing, binding with ropes, and death from sorcery—the parents, children, grandchildren, and some siblings, and siblings' children of the person primarily affected undergo the ritual. Links through females as well as males are recognized—daughters' children as well as sons' children attend—but they are not traced so far, and a brother's or half-brother's children attend far more often than a sister's children. Moreover, children of an unrelated co-wife perform the death ritual for a woman rather than her sister's children.

593 Wives always attend rituals in which their husbands are concerned—indeed, they often come with their children when their husbands stay away—but when the wife is concerned as a sister or daughter, her husband never accompanies her.

593 602 The closest relatives, such as own children, children of the heir or of a related co-wife, and proximate full siblings, must *all* participate, but the more distant relatives select representatives.

602 The range of relations concerned varies with the particular ritual—it is widest in the twin ritual and narrowest for an ordinary birth—and is also modified by proximity, for relatives who live near come when those in the same category living twenty miles away do not.

Affines (*alaka*) never perform a ritual together even when they are next-door neighbours and close friends, but *alaka* in one generation are *akipoo* (mother's kin) in the next, and a man and his *akipoo* can participate together, as in the protection against sorcery described. More often, however, the members of each lineage act separately.

602 621 •613 Our Nyakyusa informants distinguished the officiants—*alayago* —from those undergoing a ritual but they did not make distinctions of the sort attempted here between principals and kin who do not undergo the ritual. The distinctions they drew were between kinsmen and neighbours and between lineages. At a death

2: Wilson E-S (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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ritual they distinguish *abakamu* (kinsmen) from *abandu itulo* (non-relatives) or *abapakijanga* (villagers), and *abakilolo* (those of the lineage of a dead man) from *abalo* (affines) and mother's relatives (*abijuwa*). These categories have different functions.

(*b*) *Christians*

The performance of family rituals is complicated by the fact that 16 per cent of the Nyakyusa are professing Christians, and in almost every lineage there are individuals who withdraw from the full performance of traditional rituals at death, puberty, and marriage, birth, and misfortune. In most cases such a withdrawal is treated tolerantly by the pagan kinsmen: the Christian kinsmen come to mourn, to congratulate the bride, to express sympathy with the parents of twins; and their non-participation in the washing and shaving and avoidance of ritual meat and beer is accepted. At the funeral of Mwamulenga his preceding full brother, who should have been a principal in the death ritual, was a Christian, and he took no part, though his children went through it. At the funeral of Mwampiki (p. 248) one boy was left untreated on the ground that he was a Christian and a Christian 'should not have two gods'. At the puberty ritual of Mwaihojo's daughter (p. 91) the brother called to wash with her was influenced by Christians and was reluctant to take part, though he finally did so.

Only when a son who is heir to family wealth, or to the office of chieftainship or priesthood refuses the inheritance of widows (as a Christian must do) is there very strong pressure on him to conform to traditional custom: the union of the heir with the widows is held essential to their health. Sometimes also there is acute conflict between different members of the family over the performance of an autopsy, the pagans pressing for it and the Christians opposing it. This we saw in the death of E. when her pagan senior brother wished to examine her, and her Christian junior brother opposed him vehemently.

That Christians cannot take part in certain of the rituals[1] and do not suffer if they omit them is generally accepted. The farewell to the dead at the homestead of the deceased, and the treatment of kinsmen of twins, fall into this category. About certain other rituals, such as the ritual of the gasping cough and the protection against sorcery, opinions are divided. Some of our Christian friends insisted that 'the gasping cough is a real illness' and cited

[1] There are minor differences in the rules of the different missions.

2: Wilson E-S (1934-1938)1957 F3617 Ngonde F3617
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431 between the groom's lineage and that of the bride during the puberty-marriage ritual.

431 Within a lineage, also, there is some circulation of property. A
•613 young man is provided with marriage-cattle by his father, or father's heir; a father kills a cow at his son's funeral, a son does likewise for his father; and if a son offends his father he begs pardon with a gift. A daughter is given a gift by her father at the close of the puberty ritual, and he or his heir kills a cow at her funeral.

431 Village neighbours are closely identified with the father, and
621 feast on the bull of puberty and the offering provided by an erring son, and give gifts to a daughter when she reaches maturity.

431 Kinsmen and neighbours are expected to help provide food, and firewood on which to cook it, for the guests at a funeral or marriage or at a twin-birth ritual. On the first day of a funeral guests are fed on food provided by the bereaved household, on the following day on that provided by their kinsmen, and on the third day on that provided by the village neighbours. Before the marriage-cattle are brought for his daughter, a man asks his kinsmen and immediate neighbours to help him cook for 'the husbands'—not to ask for such help is unfriendly. Kinsmen and neighbours also bring gifts of millet at a funeral and after an abnormal birth, which is used for brewing the ritual beer.

(d) The symbolism of participation and exchange

431 What is implied by undergoing a ritual or offering gifts? Par-
602 ticipation in a ritual implies close kinship. We see, in the rituals performed after death, or spearing, or binding with ropes, the unity of the group composed of parents, children, grandparents, and siblings; the acknowledgement of a closer link between some siblings than between others; a recognition that wives are of 'one blood' with their husbands; and a separation between kinsmen and affines who are of another blood. In the twin ritual the limits of recognized kinship are expressed by participation and in the death ritual they are expressed by attendance. Observance of the taboo of avoidance, like attendance at rituals, is taken as evidence of kinship.

554 The difference in the status of senior and junior wives, and of
602 eldest and junior daughters and sons, also appears in the rituals at puberty and marriage and at death. The unity between living and dead agnatic kin and, in a lesser degree, mother's kin, is ex-

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1936)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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§29 rituals: 'they are customary' (*kalwiko*), 'they come to us from long ago', 'our fathers and grandfathers performed them'; and established in the nature of the universe: 'Kyala made us black people like that.'

(3) The nature of the shades

778 The nature of the shades is revealed in Nyakyusa rituals, and
643 we are now in a position to summarize their attributes.

The shades, 'those who have risen from the dead', are the dead members of a lineage and, unless they were ruling chiefs when alive, they have power only over their own kinsmen, and are concerned only with behaviour between members of the lineage, not with behaviour towards outsiders. As we have seen, the shades of her father's lineage 'move aside a little' from a woman when marriage-cattle and the bull of puberty have been given for her but, if these are still owing, it is thought that her child as well as she herself may be made ill by her father's shades. Membership of a lineage is determined by the passage of marriage-cattle: a child belongs to the group which provided cattle for its mother. Therefore, it is argued, the shades of the lineage which provided the cattle, and they alone, if the payment has been made in full, have power over children. If no cattle have been given the child is in the power of the mother's shades. But there are difficulties over the *ilipiki* medicine, for only that of the grantor's lineage can safely be used, and its use implies membership of the lineage that provides it. There is a further idea that shades only have power over those living in a homestead of their lineage. 'A child is never made ill by the mother's shades when it is in the father's homestead, only when it is with its mother's people.'

775 The dead dwell beneath (*pasi*), in 'the land of the shades' (*lubaguka*), which is a shadowy reflection of the land of the living, with homesteads and gardens, wives and cattle, villages and chiefdoms.

MWAKAMBO: People think that in the land of the shades they build homes like we do, they marry wives, they have children, they plant food and build houses. I heard this always from old men, but they only guess. They say: 'Perhaps it is nice, perhaps horrible.' They do not know very much. They fear to die. I have never met any old pagan man who wanted to die, they always fear. Property is important: People are much taken up with the idea that riches are there in the land of the shades. They say: 'If a man dies his fathers come to receive

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 F3617 Ngonde F3617
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CHAPTER X

THE SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE RITUALS OF KINSHIP

(c) *The symbolic expression of structural relationships*

Two rituals of kinship express, first and foremost, the differentiation and the unity of agnatic lineages. In all the rituals we have discussed members of a lineage act together as a distinct group, bound together by common 'blood' which is symbolized by the *dipele* medicine. 'It is our kinship, it is our blood.' A member of the lineage is protected by it, and illegitimate children who are not of the lineage may not share it. The new-born infant drinks it with his mother whose breasts are washed with it; the nubile girl washes with her father or brother, thinking: 'I have fathers, I am no bastard.' Its use is an acknowledgement of agnatic kinship and legitimacy.

A lineage includes the living and dead, who have communion together, sharing *dipele* medicine and food and beer, in most of the rituals of the cycle. 'All the food which we have eaten you have eaten.' And the dead receive the dying of their lineage. 'The shade has created us, we come from him, we die, we go there to him; not to others, but to him.' The shades cause menstruation and sexual desire, and men and women cannot produce children without their support. Therefore reproductive power is controlled by the lineage, and virginity is something valuable to it.

A woman is a member of two lineages. At marriage she is partly transferred to her husband's lineage. She washes with *dipele* medicine with her husband and 'using it means that the bride is now of his lineage'. When the bull of puberty has been handed over the shades of her father must 'move aside a little' that she may conceive by her husband, but still the bond with her father's lineage is not severed. 'The blood' of a married woman is created by her shades and those of her husband together. Both sets control procreation, though the inference is that her father's shades cease to have control when *all* the marriage-cattle have been handed over.

2: Wilson E-S (1934-1938)1957 FNU? Ngonde FNU?
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Yet still she remains a daughter of her father's lineage and shares in its rituals as well as in those of her husband's.

Lineages are linked by marriage and kinship between them is established by the passage of cattle. The son-in-law becomes 'one blood' with his parents-in-law when they drink the beer brewed or eat the chicken killed at the consummation of the marriage; some of his semen is buried in his father-in-law's grave, and his spear is placed in his father-in-law's hut. The significance of the link is magnified by the thicket of taboos which surrounds 'mixing bloods', and once forged the link should be, and commonly is, retained long after the deaths of the individuals by whom it was created, for each is replaced, the husband by a brother or son, the wife by a sister or brother's daughter. For each heir the ritual of 'mixing bloods' is performed afresh reminding them of their separation and union.

Cattle are closely identified with men and therefore with lineages. The shades watch over them. Like men, they are in danger from women who are ritually impure; at the death of their owner they, too, mourn; and kinship relationships are established and expressed by their transfer from one lineage to another. 'Kinship is cattle.'

The distinction and opposition of lineages is apparent in the ritual of puberty and marriage which expresses both hostility and conciliation. The two lineages dance in rivalry, haggle over cattle, and exchange feasts. Among the Nyakyusa, the opposition is not between men and women, as suggested by some recent writers on rituals elsewhere,[1] but between lineages; though the men and the women, both of the groom's party and the bride's, act separately. The hostility and conciliation reach their culmination in the ritual of vituperation among the Lugulu, when groom's group and bride's insult each other by word and in action and then, at the instance of the master of ceremonies, praise each other and feast together.

Among the Nyakyusa there is no clan organization and no common name for a lineage of many generations like the Pondo *isibongo*, which identifies agnatic kinship within a large group. A common name is used by members of a lineage of three or four generations at the most, and among commoners there is no invocation of a distant ancestor as among the Pondo. The hero

[1] E. Fortune, *The Forgotten Language*; M. Gluckman, 'The Role of the Sexes in Wiko Circumcision Ceremonies', in *Social Structure*, edited by M. Fortes (1949).

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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613 referred to is not necessarily an ancestor of those who speak of him. In the rituals the participants look towards the direction from which their ancestors came, and the details vary both with the cultural area and with the particular lineage, but similarity in ritual observance is no ground for claiming kinship. The one recognized bond is common participation—attending one another's funerals and observing the rules of avoidance.

The segmentation of lineages is by houses. Ties between full siblings are closer than those between half-siblings and this is immediately apparent in the attendance at, and participation in rituals, as the genealogy of Mwakibete (Table (a)) shows. Full siblings, particularly successive and linked siblings, are closely identified. The most important link between men or women is inheritance. The heir takes the name and social position of the deceased, succeeding to his or her rights and obligations, and observing the same avoidances. 'A shade is resurrected in the body of his child.' The heir is a junior[1] man or woman of the lineage, preferably a full brother or sister, but possibly a half-brother or sister, or parallel cousin, or a son, or brother's son, or brother's daughter.

613 601 When the heir is a son, or brother's son or daughter, the separation so strictly maintained between generations is bridged for that individual only; he or she changes generation and a man is treated by his former comrades as a 'father' and referred to by his wives as 'father-in-law', even though they are still his wives and live with him.

The identification of alternate generations is expressed in calling grandchildren ('the comrades of the shades') to eat the sacrificial meat or fish, or take the first sip of beer, as well as in the absence of taboos between affines of such alternate generations. A woman does not avoid her husband's grandfather. Thus, though the lineage is treated in some respects as a unit, one man (or woman) of it being able to replace another and override the distinction between successive generations, the unity is not pushed as far as among many other peoples, such as the Pondo, where the form of behaviour appropriate to a father-in-law applies to *all* senior members of his lineage irrespective of generation.

[71]

613 559 Differences in status within the lineage are clearly shown in the rituals. In their observance seniors precede juniors, men precede

[1] If there is no junior full brother, a senior full brother may inherit provided that he has not previously inherited from his father and so become 'father'.

[Category 11b, facing p. 270. – Analyst]

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 F3617 Ngonde F3617
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women, daughters of the lineage precede wives. Seniority, of course, does not depend solely on age, and we once saw a little boy precede his father in the performance of a ritual for his grandmother, with whose generation he was identified. The relative status of husband and wife is expressed in the taboo on a woman 'overstepping' her husband physically or metaphorically, and 'overstepping' is symbolized (oddly to a Christian) by the sign of a cross. The precedence of the chief wife is very marked. In commoner families she alone washes with her husband using the *ilipili* medicine, and he performs the death ritual for her only. A chief may do this for two wives. In Selya a father washes in the puberty ritual with his senior daughter, and among the Kukwe a woman washes with her daughter or eldest son's first wife. 'To wash is to admit that I have lived, and borne a child, and grown up.'

All the rituals celebrate a change in status, and danger lies in not recognizing or admitting the change, in clinging to the past. This is most obvious in the death ritual, which is directed to the separation of the living and the dead. The mourners have the corpse 'on their bodies', they may not separate themselves from him by washing till the appropriate moment, and they share their food and *ilipili* medicine with the shade, thereby recognizing him as a kinsman; but in due course they drive him off: 'You were our kinsman before but now it is finished, you are a stranger.' 'You are no relative of ours.' 'We are not corpses.' And at the same time they bring him back transformed, as a beneficent spirit in the home. The pattern is a common one in Bantu Africa: the Nyakyusa peculiarity is (1) the speed with which the transformation is achieved (commonly the 'bringing back' of the spirit is delayed a year, whereas the Nyakyusa may delay only a month); and (2) the close correspondence between the change in status of the dead and the change in status of the older generation, who 'move aside' at the 'coming out'. Each generation has its day and must give place to the next.

All through the rituals the dominance of the agnatic lineage is evident, but it does not exclude the recognition of kinship in the female line. Daughters' children *must* perform the ritual at death, twin birth, spearing, and binding with ropes, for their grandparents, while some sisters' children, and father's sisters' sons, may do so also. What is clear from the genealogies is that kinship links in the female line are not traced as far as in the male line and,

2: Wilson K-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

though wives are assimilated to their husbands' lineages for ritual purposes, men play no part in the rituals of their wives' lineages.

The second fundamental principle expressed in the rituals of kinship is that a moral law holds within the lineage. Senior kinsmen, living and dead, have a mystical power over their juniors, but their anger is dangerous only if it is just. They cannot murder irresponsibly. Kinsmen are 'murderers of one another' in the sense that the life and death of one affect the others. The sins of a father are visited on his children, his juniors in the lineage (though a woman's sins affect only her own husband and children), and the very fact of kinship makes a mystical bond between agnatic kin, descendants of a common great-grandfather, and a man and his daughters or sister's children. The moral law is thought to operate also within the age-village, where the just are protected and the evil punished by 'the breath of men'; but within both lineage and village irresponsible and malicious injury by witches or sorcerers is possible.

When misfortune occurs the sufferer, and his kinsmen and neighbours, seek an explanation in conflicts and ritual omissions, and interpret the misfortune in terms of these, putting the possible alternatives before the oracle. Thus the danger of conflict with kinsmen and neighbours, and of neglect of ritual, is constantly before men's minds. In practice, there is a strong tendency to push the blame for misfortune outside the lineage of living and dead on to the neighbours.

(b) *The celebration of rituals and maintenance of the structure*

In any society the practical, intellectual, and emotional aspects are mutually dependent; the practical organization is dependent upon, and at the same time supports, an intellectual system—certain cosmological ideas—and attitudes. It has been argued very cogently that these ideas and attitudes are maintained by their expression in myth and rite[1] but little evidence for this has been published. Can objective evidence be collected? The anthropologist cannot look into men's minds; he is not concerned with personal religion—with the varieties of religious experience. Can he observe any effect of participation in ritual upon the behaviour of groups and categories of people? It must be admitted that our evidence here is thin.

[1] A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *The Andaman Islanders* (1922), pp. 256 ff.; *Structure and Function in Primitive Society* (1952), pp. 157 ff.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1935) 1939
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[177] that they have always been cattle men and they need no instruction on cattle. The tsetse over stock limitation and soil conservation, so acute in many parts of Africa, is only just appearing [332] [342] in Rungwe district, but potentially it is serious.

Pressure on land, and the planting of a valuable long-term crop such as coffee, have undermined the traditional organization of age-villages. The old men are no longer prepared to move to make way for their sons and, without a new deal in land each generation, the territorial separation of the generations is blurred. Boys villages are no longer visible in the hills near Rungwe mission, partly because so many young men are away, either at school or in employment, but largely because most of the land is taken up with coffee gardens. Homesteads are being built further apart as men lay out coffee round their houses, and sons often build on a corner of their father's estate instead of in a separate village. On the plain, also, the pressure of population blurs the boundaries between generations. Only in the least heavily populated middle belt are numerous boys' villages still clearly visible, and here too a 'coming out' has recently been celebrated, with some redistribution of land. The scarcer land, that in old volcanic craters, was always inherited, like cattle, not reallocated each generation, and almost all cultivated land is now treated in this way. In many chiefdoms, therefore, a young man looks to his father or senior brother for land, rather than to the village headman, and inheritance is supremely important. But the form of [428] inheritance is changing: property now goes directly from father to son, not as formerly to each of a group of full brothers before reverting to the senior son of the eldest of them. The claims of more distant kinsmen on inherited stock are less than they used to be; such stock becomes the exclusive property of father and sons, rather than property in which members of a lineage of three or [473] four generations have reciprocal rights. The main economic bond which held the lineage together, the exchange of cattle, is thus broken.

Formerly a marriage was a contract between lineages rather [583] than between individuals. A girl was betrothed before puberty to a [581] man of her father's choice and should he die she was still regarded as married to his heir. Should she die a sister replaced her. Ideally a marriage bond between lineages lasted for generations, each man who died being replaced by a brother or son, each woman by a sister or brother's daughter. The choice of a partner in marriage

9 Wilson E-1 (1924-1955) 1959
F307 Ngwoma F307
Nyakyusa

was not an individual one. True, a girl gave her formal consent in the marriage ritual, but the pressure on her to accept the husband selected for her by her kinsmen was almost irresistible. In the thirties Christian women who refused their husband's heir and lived alone, or married an unrelated man of their choice, were regarded by their pagan sisters as very daring, and little girls in pagan families took it as a matter of course that they should replace their dead sisters; today the right of a widow to choose whom she will marry is generally accepted, and the custom of replacing a dead woman by her sister has lapsed. 'Every girl wants her own husband nowadays', the old women say. Thus lineage obligations give way to individual freedom of choice in marriage. At the same time the rituals which emphasized the lineage are dropped or modified. The fearful boundary of a double birth no longer appals men and the twin ritual which used to bring together all the living members of a lineage of three generations is not celebrated at all. At a puberty ritual a pagan girl may be given the *ilipki* medicine, the symbol of 'the blood of the lineage' by her mother, but there is no seclusion and elaborate feasting, no sacrifice of the bull of puberty that her father's shades may 'move aside a little' to make way for the shades of her husband's lineage. Only at a funeral do kinsmen still gather and celebrate, for many still fear the shades, and at a funeral the heir is installed and the importance of property and the inheritance of it has not diminished one whit. As we have seen, the traditional religion was formulated in terms of kinship; the gods were senior kinsmen; but today God, *Kyala*, is no ancestor; to pagans as well as to Christians he is superior and supreme. Men are still classified by their lineages, and one of the topics of village questions is how Prince Charles can be heir to the British throne when his father is not of the house of Windsor; but already in the economic field, and increasingly in the religious, it is the family of parents and children which is now dominant, not the lineage.

Divorce is far more frequent than formerly, partly because women claim a greater freedom of behaviour than before, as well as the right of choosing their own husbands, and are supported by the courts. As one village headman put it, 'Formerly a father beat his daughter with a stick if she ran home and sent her back to her husband who also beat her.' The women reject the old pattern of subservience which was expressed in crouching to greet a man, and addressing him in a very deferential fashion; the men observe, and

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
F3017 Ngonde F3017
Nyakyusa

MEMBERSHIP OF VILLAGES

(a) *Ngonde* (Senior village of Generation IV)

Member	Village of father	Village of father-in-law	Kinsmen in village
a. Mwangilo (VII)	Ignenke	Bujoge Father Lubaga Ignenke	Half-brother Half-sister married to headman Father's half-brother
e. Kibelle (Headman)	Kisali Father's halo in Kibwende	Ignenke Elder in home village	Married half-sister of chief
f. Mkangamahili Mwaipopo	Ignenke	Mwangomo's (C of) children	Half-brother of chief
g. Mwaibambo	Bujoge, Moved to Kibwende	Another children	None traced
h. Mwambamboka	Bujoge	Bujoge Moved to Nkoka	Married daughter of chief's father's half-brother
i. Mwakalinga	Ignenke	Ignenke	None traced
j. Mwangoma	Kinyasa	Ignenke	None traced
k. Mwaka	Ignenke	Ignenke	None traced
l. Mwakipamile	Ignenke	Ignenke	None traced
m. Mwakilasa	Kinyasa	Ignenke	None traced
n. Mwakilyankawa	Another children	Mwambanya's children (C of)	None traced
o. Mwakipamile	Another children	Ignenke	None traced
p. Mwakalikile	Mwangomo's children (C of)	Mwangomo's children (C of) Kabula	None traced
q. Mwambigile	Ignenke	Lupunde	None traced
r. Mwakinyalile	Ignenke	Mwalinga's children (C of)	None traced
s. Mwakasile	Kibwende	Lupunde	None traced
t. Mwajajile	Another children	Another children	None traced
u. Mwasambo	Isoki	Ignenke Kinyasa	None traced
v. Kinyaya Mwaipopo	Bujoge	Ignenke	Half-brother of chief's father
w. Mwangilo	Kinyasa	Ignenke	None traced

i.e. out of twenty members, three are close kinsmen, and two are married to kinswomen of these three. The remaining fifteen members are not connected by kinship ties.

[p. 224]

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FN17 Ngonde FN17
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(2) *Kasesha* (Generation III)

Member	Village of father	Village of father's father	Number in village	Remarks
a. Ommenhow	Kinyero		Elder brother of 2	One in Nkoba. Elder brother to another children (C 2d)
a. Augustin	Kinyero	Has married	Younger brother of 2	
b. Kapalamulenge	Kinyero	Lugumbo Kasesha's children (C 4)		Brother in Kasesha village. Brother in children (C 4). Brother in plain. (All or four built in Kasesha).
c. Kibido	Bujinga	(a) Bujinga (d) Kinyero	Half-brother of 3	Elder brother Ngumbo, moved to C 4d. Brother in Christian village Kasesha (or four built in Kasesha). Brother in Mbeya or work. Brother in Iziki (four away or work).
g. Nkuluwe	Bujinga		Half-brother of 4	
d. Mwakisamo	Bujinga	(a) Kinyero (b) Mwangomo's country (C 4d) (c) Kibondo	Half-brother of 7	Six full brothers, 4 half-brothers moved to other children, another to Zambia. Daughter married Kibondo, another married Nkoba.
f. Nkuwa	Bujinga	not married	Half-brother of 4	
h. Nkoba	Bujinga	Kibondo moved to Ngumbo		His only son of mother, a half-brother to Nkoba.
g. Pelekind	Another children (C 4f)	Nkingwana		Father's younger brother's son brothers of Mbeya.
m. Mwalikuki				

i.e. out of ten members, there are now pair of brothers and two pairs of half-brothers, but all have close kinsmen (brothers, half-brothers, or father's brother's sons) in other villages or childhoods. Kasesha has diminished from fifty-three members in 1938 to ten in 1955. Many members have died and many have moved, some to the forest colony, some to the plain to plant rice, four to Lugumbo.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
F317 Ngonde F317
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(c) *Kamle* (Generation IV and V)

Boys (some omitted)		*Father*	*Father's village*
Asukile	full brothers	Mwaseba (136)	Mpunga
Abijali			
Chilala			
Mwaka			
Fwila	half-brothers	Mwaseba (136)	Mpunga
Tchalilo			
Lwidi			
Kimambo			
Mwaikibaile		Nsongole	Mwaiko
Asikenyile		Nyali	Mwaiko
Lukapwa		Mbukwapo	Mwaiko
Mwaikibaile		Lwilasa	Mwaiko
Asapwile		Mwaipile	Mwaiko
Kafu		Chisale	Mwaiko
Kasambile		Mwanjasi	Mwaiko
Nkinyesile		Mwaikasu	Mwaiko
Bajobo		Mwangasi	Mwaiko
Asikenile		Gwilliam	Mwaiko (inherited in Lupanshi)
Kajolwa		Mwalwanshile	Mwaiko
Fwila		Asikile	Mwaiko
Mwilinga		Simon	Mwaiko
Nkhalanga		Mwangajile	Mwaiko
Onjale		Mwaijaja	Mkondi

i.e. out of twenty-three members, two are full brothers and six others are half-brothers. No other kinship connections were traced.

CONDEMNED PRIESTS MENTIONED

Kibongolaja Kyamba Kindi Ngwangwa Kibwaile	Hereditary Kings priests who come to Lubaga and visit Kamile on the way
Kimula Mwasalangaba Mwasikijali	Hereditary priests of Lubaga
Mwasukanda	Kamile's assistant priest
Mwalukwa Nyasa	Hereditary priests of Mbyanga, the grave of Mwakisenbwe (90)
Kinagwa Ngaliya Njobokwa	Village headmen of Mwaijanga (82) and priests of his grave
Mwanshapwa Kabaja	Village headmen of Mwaskanga (134) and priests responsible for 'washing out' of Mwanyika (177)